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TO THE SUSSEX FARMERS,

Who will be assembled on Monday, the 3d December, in public meeting at Lewes.

Kensington, 28 Nov. 1821.

GENTLEMEN,

I READ, in the Sussex newspapers, an advertisement in the following words: “*Agricultural Distress.* At the quarterly meeting of the Sussex Central Agricultural Association, holden at the Bear Inn, Lewes, on the 6th of November, Mr. Ellman in the Chair, it was unanimously resolved, That a public meeting be holden, on Monday the third of December, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, at the Star Inn, at Lewes, to consider of the best manner of laying the Distress of Agriculture before

“Parliament, in hopes of obtaining relief; at which not only the owners and occupiers of land, but also any persons who consider their welfare inseparable from that of the farmers, are invited to attend.—

“N. B. A plain ordinary *half-a-crown* a head will be provided at the Star Inn, at 3 o'clock.”

Now, gentlemen, under this invitation, I, if it were not just at this time, particularly inconvenient, would certainly attend at this meeting; for, though the destruction of the present race of farmers might not cause my destruction; yet I cannot consider as my “welfare” any state of things which would produce such general and dreadful suffering of a class of men, amongst whom I was born and bred, and in whose pursuits and whose society I have

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always found so much real pleasure.

Not being able to address you by word of mouth, I am about to do it by the pen; and, I do it, I beg you to be assured, with the most sincere desire to assist in directing your minds to the adoption of judicious measures on the day of your meeting at Lewes; measures likely to tend to your relief; and not to your further delusion and your still *greater distress*. Some distress you have already experienced; hundreds upon hundreds of renting farmers have already fallen; but, these are to be followed by *thousands upon thousands*; men who think that nothing can shake them have to fall; unless you speedily open your eyes to the *real causes of falling prices*; causes which are still at work, which acquire strength as they proceed, and which inevitably *must bring prices down lower than even our fathers ever knew them to be.*

Before I proceed further, let me endeavour to set you right as

to two things which might otherwise tend to defeat my present object. Being inhabitants of this kingdom, it is next to impossible, that you should not have heard and read more than ten thousand accusations against me. It is, perhaps, useless for me to say, that these have all been wholly groundless, and that they have been hatched by the tools of Corruption in order to prevent the success of my labours, all of which tended to cause that *timely* change of system which would have prevented your present sufferings. It is, perhaps, useless for me to say this; but, at any rate, the reasons I have to offer you have nothing bad in their character. *They cannot be "radicals."* They consist of words, of which you understand the meaning. *They cannot be "rebels and revolutionists."* From whatever pen they may drop, they are still the same. And, besides, is it not time for you now to begin to suspect that you might be *wrong* in backing those who so loudly condemned the

Radicals and their *Meetings*? You are holding *Meetings now!* Is it not time, then, to begin to fear that you might be wrong, when you backed the men that put down the Meetings of your poorer countrymen? You now call for *relief*, and you call for it in vain; and will you still persist that you were *right* in backing those, who, instead of yielding the poorer classes relief, instead of patiently discussing their claims, put down their Meetings? I think that a little reflection will tell you, that you now ought not to reject *reason*, because that reason comes from him, who has been, as far as it was practicable, silenced for making complaints of *distress and misery*.

The other thing that may be an obstacle in the way of your attending to me, is, the possible thought, that it is *presumption* in me to attempt to *instruct* you. So it might be, as to your business *as farmers*; but, it is by no means presumption in me to suppose, that I, who have, during so many

years, studied the nature and watched the progress of this system of government, understand better than you can understand, the effect of the acts of that government, and the probabilities and possibilities of any *remedy* being applied by that government to any evil that you complain of. In matters of *law*, you think it no impeachment of your understanding to submit implicitly to the opinion of the lawyer; and, is not the cause of your distress a matter of much greater intricacy, than that of any case which can arise in law? Besides, if it be incontestibly true, that, though in a foreign land at the time, I explicitly foretold, that that which has befallen you would befall you, and that it would come, too, in precisely the way in which it has come; if it be incontestibly true, that, in 1814 (even so early as that) I predicted your ruin in spite of corn-bills, unless you saved yourselves by *avoiding leases*; if I have been *always right* as to this great matter, and

if this be notorious to hundreds of thousands of persons: if this be the case, is it presumption in me to offer you my advice in this critical period of your affairs; and would it be wisdom in you to turn a deaf ear to that advice?

T
rusting to your good sense for an answer in the negative, I now proceed to offer you that advice.

You meet, agreeably to the advertisement, "*to consider of the best means of laying the distress of agriculture before parliament, in hopes of obtaining relief.*" The real meaning would, perhaps, be better expressed thus: *to consider what way of laying a statement of your distress before parliament will afford the strongest hopes of obtaining you relief;* and with the matter, thus simplified, I mean to deal.

The *best way of laying your distress before Parliament* is certainly that which is likely to obtain you *relief.* But, it is not a mere statement of misery of your case; it is not a mere description of your ruined circumstances, that is

likely to do you any good. The Parliament has very fully admitted *the existence of your distress;* but, what it says is, that it has no *remedy;* and that you must make up for your present losses: "*by the savings of more prosperous times;*" or, by the "*credit*" that you have; that is to say, by *borrowing money;* though it has not, in its "*collective wisdom,*" condescended to point out those who are likely to *lend* money to men carrying on a business acknowledged by the Parliament itself to be *a losing business.*

The statement of your case is this: all your produce has fallen in price, while your out-goings have been contracted but in a trifling degree. You, and particularly, you who are bound by lease, have nearly as much to pay in rent as you had to pay in 1813; nearly as much to pay in poor-rates; nearly as much to pay for candles, soap, salt, leather, and malt; quite as much to pay in house-tax, in window-tax, in turnpike; and, in short, your ex-

penses are diminished in a very trifling degree, though the price of a South Down ewe has now fallen, upon an average, from about forty-five shillings to twenty-two shillings. This is the state of your case; and, if you can avoid utter ruin in such a course of business, what enormous bags of gold must there be hoarded up in your houses! However, as you well know, there are no such bags of gold hoarded up in your houses. Some of you have large fortunes, without doubt; but, large as they may be, they must soon be dissipated, if this course of business be pursued; and, as to those who are but even with the world, their ruin, their bringing down to the level of the labourer, and, perchance, to that of the pauper, will speedily arrive.

But, to what end would you lay this statement before the Parliament, unless you accompanied the statement with some *specific prayer* for redress and relief? That the Parliament has the power to relieve you is certain;

but, before it give you relief it must have the *will* as well as the power; and, for you to dispose it to have that will you must do something a great deal more efficacious than that of grumbling, of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. The calamity under which you suffer is not a natural production of the earth or of the heavens. It is not a visitation from God; nor has it been occasioned by any accidental combination of circumstances, physical or moral. It is the result; the natural result; the foreseen, the long foreseen and foretold and inevitable result of Acts of Parliament; and, therefore, that it does admit of a remedy is certain; and for that remedy it is that you have specifically to pray.

But, in order to pray for a remedy, suitable and efficacious, you must first well and truly understand the *cause of the evil*. You see nothing but the *low price*. In keeping your eye steadily fixed upon that, you forget the *outgoings*; you forget that five

shillings pay one shilling as easily as fifteen shillings pay three shillings ; you forget that low price is just as good as high price, provided the outgoings bear a proportion to the price : all this you forget, and drive on for high price as the *only means of relief* : and you are not now to be told by me, that the parliament, powerful as it is, as God knows and as we all feel, has not the power to give you high price without adopting measures, without adopting such measures as would render it at once odious and contemptible throughout the earth, and as would, to a certainty, at no distant day, produce a convulsion that would shake the very frame of the Government to atoms. It is impossible for the Parliament to give you a high price, without a *repeal of Peel's Bill*. The repeal of that Bill would, in all human probability, produce two prices, a paper price and a money price; and, even if that disgraceful and ridiculous effect were not produced, the bare repeal of the Bill would utterly destroy all con-

fidence in the Government, and annihilate the very semblance of credit.

Therefore, regarding this measure as wholly impossible, and, of course, regarding it as impossible that the Parliament can give you high price, you have next to consider whether it has the *power to diminish your outgoings*. But, before I proceed to this topic, it may be necessary, though I would fain hope it is not, to dissuade you from all attempts at obtaining high prices by the means of a Corn Bill. When this subject was first stated in 1814, I, seeing the delusion that had seized upon the minds of the farmers, did my utmost to convince them, that such a measure, while it could not fail to expose them to the hatred of all the other classes of the community, not excepting their own labourers, could, by no possibility, tend to do themselves any good.

The truth of this has been amply proved by experience ; for it is now about two years, and even with one of the worst of harvests

intervening ; it is now about two years since a single handful of foreign corn was brought into the market ; and yet, domestic corn has continued to fall lower and lower in price. In answer to those who, still obstinate in error, contend that the foreign corn in warehouse causes this lowness of price, by locking up the money which would otherwise be employed in the purchase of English corn ; in answer to these persons, if the grossness of the stupidity of the idea render them worthy of an answer ; in answer to these persons, what have we more to do than to ask them, whether there be any foreign oxen, sheep, pigs or poultry in warehouse ; and whether the low price of English stock arise from the money being locked up, which would otherwise be employed in the purchase of English stock ?

Really, Gentlemen, the notion is so flagrantly absurd that I feel pain in the thought that it should be necessary, that it should by possibility be necessary, to ad-

dress, in the way of refutation of it, a single word to persons like you ; and I should not have been able to bring myself to do it, were I not apprehensive, that the Parliament, pressed by your solicitations, may really pass a Bill, *imposing a permanent and high duty on foreign corn.* This might, probably, satisfy you ; and it would certainly afford you no relief. Nay, a total prohibition of foreign corn would afford you not a particle of relief, and, would only form a pretext for the keeping up of rents and of tythes. It would be the certain means of your ruin ; for it would delude you on to the yeilding up of your last shilling to the Landlord and the Parson ; and this you will see as clear as day-light, if you look at the real cause of the lowering of prices.

What you have to obtain, is, a *diminution of your out-goings* ; always bearing in mind, that a man who has ten shillings to pay, and has ten shillings in his pocket, is just as rich, as he who has

thirty shillings to pay, and has thirty shillings in his pocket. Your outgoings have been augmented by *Act of Parliament*. This is the thing that you are to look at: *it is the Parliament which has augmented your outgoings*; and your business is to obtain from the Parliament a reduction of those outgoings. The Landlord and the Parson also have augmented your outgoings. Theirs is a separate concern. I will speak of what you ought to do with regard to them hereafter. Let me first show *how it is* that the Parliament has augmented your outgoings.

During the times of high prices, numerous new taxes were laid on, and all the old taxes were augmented. But to pass over the history of these, observe this one fact, that, during the times of high prices, the taxes of the Nation were augmented from *sixteen millions* a year to upwards of *seventy millions* a year in war, and that they are now settled down to about

fifty million a year. Now, observe, *farm-produce* was at a higher price, when the taxes amounted to *sixteen millions* a year, than it is at *this time*! It is clear, therefore, how this nation has had oppression brought upon it by the war. It is clear that the whole Nation must suffer from this cause; and now let us come closer to your particular case.

Without going into a detail of the taxes and rents and tithes and other outgoings, and without travelling back over all the period of high prices; let us observe, that, in 1818 you had a certain sum to pay annually, in these outgoings, and that *then* wheat had long been upon an average of years at about twelve shillings a bushel, and South Down ewes at about forty shillings. With these prices, you were able to pay your then rents and taxes. But, in the ever memorable year 1819, that same Parliament that passed the Six Acts and that expressed its approbation of the conduct of

the Manchester Magistrates ; laries, pensions, sinecures, grants that same Parliament passed a Bill, called *Peel's Bill*, which, in effect, was a Bill to reduce wheat to the price of *four shillings a bushel* upon an average ; and to bring down South Down ewes with Lamb to *fifteen shillings a head* ; for, this is the mark, mind you, to which wheat and South Down ewes will come at last. The fall will not stop at the prices of 1790. I beg you to *mark that*. They are much more likely to come down to the prices of 1740. But, "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." They have already come down one half, and this, you will observe, solely and entirely in *consequence of an act of Parliament*. No visitation of God. Providence has had nothing to do with the matter, save and except that it has been pleased to permit the Parliament to exist.

The Parliament, when it passed this Bill, passed no Bill to reduce taxes one-half as well as prices one-half ; no Bill to reduce sa-

and so forth one-half ; no Bill to reduce the interest of the fund-holder one-half ; no Bill to reduce the pay of the twenty-seven thousand officers of the Army and Navy one-half. All these remain, receiving, to the full, what they received at the times of high prices. The Judges' salaries were *doubled* during the times of high prices, and that, too, upon the *express ground of those high prices*. Your labourers' wages were not doubled ; but still you lowered them when the low prices came, and yet, not a word is said by Mr. HUME or any body else, *about lowering the salaries of the Judges* ! A few poor Clerks, are, it seems, to undergo a reduction of salary ; and so far so good ; but, at this rate, a suitable reduction will not take place in ten life times ; and you, if you were to live so long, and had each of you fifty sacks of guineas, would have to pay the old taxes out of the new prices ; or, in other words, to lose, upon every hundred acres of

land, about a hundred and fifty pounds a year.

What you have to pray for, therefore, is, not that the Parliament will raise your prices, for that it cannot do; but that it will diminish your expences, for that it can do if it will, by reducing the interest of the Debt; by reducing salaries, pensions, sinecures and grants; and by bringing every thing down to the level of wheat at four shillings the bushel, and South Down ewes at fifteen shillings the head.

It is in vain for you to indulge hopes of relief from Parliamentary measures of any other description.

Measures of no other sort that the Parliament could adopt can relieve you; and these measures, be you well assured, will never be adopted without a reform of that Parliament, the reasons for which opinion are perfectly clear to my mind, but not of a nature to be stated with perfect safety to my person.

However, Gentlemen, though I think it wholly useless for you

to seek relief from the Parliament in any other way than that of praying for a reform of the Parliament itself, your relief may, in numerous cases, be obtained at once by yourselves. You took your farms upon a calculation of wheat at ten shillings a bushel. Suppose, then, you gave a hundred pounds a year for your farm. Reduce the hundred to forty; or give notice to quit. This is what you must do at last; and it is much better to be half ruined than quite ruined; it is much better to receive a little for your stock, than to have the whole of it seized and sold for the benefit of your Landlord.

If you be bound by lease, make the proposition frankly to your Landlord to reduce every hundred pounds to forty pounds. If he refuse, do the best you can; and there are very few men that cannot do more things than one under such circumstances. As to the reductions of rents and tithes, of which we read so much in pompous accounts in the newspapers; as to these reductions of ten and

twenty per cent ; what are they when your produce has fallen one-half in price ? They are a mere delusion, calculated just to feed your hopes and to lead you along till you be as poor as Job was after the Devil had dealt with his flocks and his herds. Gamesters very often let their calls win now and then a guinea, in order to encourage them to proceed in the play. But, at last, they souse upon them, and turn their purses inside out.

Let me beseech you not to be deluded by vain hopes of any change for the better. Can you, who are generally men of sense, believe it possible, that prices can rise, while the circulating money is daily diminishing ; while you see this with your own eyes, and while you know well that Peel's Bill has yet a year and a half to run, before it produces or can produce any thing like its full effect in lowering prices ? Before the month of May 1823 you will see the wheat, upon an average, at four shillings a bushel ; and

how can you expect it to be otherwise, when you know that, even after so bad a harvest, it does not, on an average of all England, maintain itself at six shillings a bushel ? However, everyone must be satisfied, that it is impossible to bring back high prices ; and, therefore, that it is impossible for you to escape ruin by any other means than that of obtaining a reduction of rent and tithes to nearly one-third of their present standard.

Gentlemen, your fate is in *your own hands*. I do not believe, that you will gain any thing by any application to the Parliament. I am sure that no application will be of any use, unless it be for a Reform of the Parliament itself ; for relief from taxes, *let the Landlords petition*, quit your farms, or bring your rents down to the standard above mentioned ; consume no taxable commodities ; keep in your pockets the money that you have got, and in gold, too ; and then join us Radicals, in *petitioning against a reduction of the Debt*, which I hope you will see

as do from one end of the country
to the other.

This is my advice. If you follow it you are safe. I have done my duty; and if you be ruined, your ruin will be your own work, and will speak my justification.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient Servant,

Wm. COBBETT.

TO

MONEY HOARDERS.

No. IV.

My Good Friends,
The thing works sweetly!

Every post brings us intelligence
of the "general working of events."

The farmers and landlords are all
in an uproar. It appears, as you
will see by the foregoing Letter,
that those in Sussex are to meet
on Monday at Lewes. It appears,
that those of Gloucestershire met
at Gloucester on Saturday the

17th instant. I passed through the Town on that very day. I wish to God I had known of the meeting! This sapient body came to the following Resolution; but I will not cram up my Register with the words of it. They *squint* at a Corn Bill; they pretend that that is the thing that is wanted; they say that the Fundholder, the Landlord and even the King, will be ruined by these *declining prices*! Oh! bless their stupid heads! In Buckinghamshire they cry aloud and spare not. The Buckinghamshire Chronicle of November the 24th, accuses some Landlords of *slipping away* without making reductions of rent, and of holding the poor tenants to the letter of their bond. This paper says, that if retrenchment and economy be not sufficient, "the Government MUST GO TO THE FUNDHOLDER," and, in spite of the interested clamour about National Faith, "and which in fact cannot consist with National Insolvency, "BRING HIM DOWN." Aye,

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but they shall not, though, without some good lusty petitions against it. If we suffer the Landlord to bring down the Fundlord, what are we poor devils to expect!

However, my friends, it is for you to congratulate yourselves on your prudent foresight. The Sovereigns that you have in your chests may be doubled in their powers of purchase by what we shall see take place in the course of a year and a half. Let the fools be gulled by the rogues till they have not a sixpence to chink upon another. You will be safe, and laugh at them both. It was impossible to stop the thing without a repeal of Peel's Bill; and that I now regard as impossible.

The gold, having supplanted the Bank notes in the hoards all over the country, now begins to make its appearance in the affairs of traffic. I wrote to you from Up-
husband, early in November, telling you that at Newbury, there were no Sovereigns in circulation, and that people were afraid to take them, understanding that they

were light. When I got back to Newbury, after three weeks absence, Sovereigns were plenty enough, and passing currently.

The late hangings for forgery will, doubtless, have their due effect upon many. When Attorneys' clerks enter heartily into the trade it is high time for those who are in the habit of keeping Bank notes by them to look to themselves. But who could be fool enough to suppose, that forgers would quit the trade with the disappearance of the one pound notes? I believe that ten pound notes would give no security against forgers; and, that, if the Old Lady were honestly to pay all in gold, as I trust she will; and then, hy-the-by, we shall not want her any longer; if she were to do this, the forgers would pitch on upon the Country rags.

However, this is speculating upon what can never take place, for, if Peel's Bill continue in force, these Country rags will all disappear, long before May 1823. Every Banker *must break*, if he

have any considerable quantity of notes out, and keep them out for any length of time. The breaking of the Bank in the North, which is announced to us in the newspapers, though, as it is stated, for *three hundred thousand pounds*, is but a mere trifle compared to what we shall see take place. What a pretty condition the people must be in in the neighbourhood of that Bank! When Minchin's Gosport and Portsmouth Bank broke, the newspapers said that the mourning could not have been greater, if there had been a *dead corpse lying in every third house in the County!* Oh! William Pitt! Oh! thou great Statesman now no more! Oh! thou Pilot that weathered the storm! Oh! thou Heaven-born Minister! Oh! thou whose statue has been stuck up to delight the eyes and to receive the adorations of the wise proprietors of the Guildhall of London! Oh! Great Man! Where art thou now? Canst not thou, standing, perchance, with

Dundas on thy right and that sweet Perceval on thy left; canst thou not cause the return to us of that "*glorious Sun of Prosperity,*" which we have not seen for these seven long years, and which thy beloved pupil Canning swore unto us, was only "*hidden behind a passing cloud?*"

Sir FRANCIS BLAKE & Co. were, I dare say, regarded as *solid as a rock*; for that is the slang of the day. So they are all; but the fools who take their paper find, at last, that paper is but paper. For my part, I pity no man that is ruined by the breaking of any Bank, in any part of the Country. I shall be told, perhaps, that every man could not foresee these things so clearly as I could. That is every man's own fault then, for I have been pointing them out to every man. But every man has not read my Register. That is his own fault again. But some men thought I was a bad man, and wrote to overturn the Government. Then they deserve to suffer for

thinking so. There was an excuse for people taking Bank notes before the Gold came out. Now there is none. No man will take these notes now, who is not a *friend of the system*; and every such man I wish to see suffer. Every man that is a friend of the paper money system, I wish to see suffer, be he who or what he may.

The main thing for you to keep your eye upon, is, the attempts that will be made to obtain a reduction of the interest of the Debt. The Landlords now see ruin staring them in the face. They do not know which way to turn themselves. A total prohibition of the importation of corn would do them no good. They must sink or reduce the interest of the Debt; and reduce that interest they never shall, without all the opposition that I can give to the measure, *unless the Parliament be first reformed*. This is the *lay* to have them on. They once accused us of wishing to annihilate the Debt; and the pro-

found Castlereagh called the wish treasonable. Well; we will be guilty of no treason, then, and no misprision of treason. We will be loyal to the King, and firm supporters of "*National Faith*."

All the stir that you see made by the Agricultural Societies, is made at the suggestion of the Landlords. In this ridiculous drama, they act monkey and the farmer's cat. However, though some of the Farmers will be duped out of their fortunes, there are many of them that will not. Many of them are quite up to the mark. There is a little knot in every county, that have taken the Register for years, snugly and quietly. They now lend it about; and though this lending does not suit me so well, it works the Landlords prodigiously. In short, my friends, to my *shop*, as I have a thousand times told them, they must come at last; and *Bott Smith* and the Edinburgh Reviewers may hang themselves in their own garters; for, hang themselves they certainly will, or, at least, ought,

when the Parliament shall at last be compelled to adopt measures which I have so long recommended, and which I will always claim as my own.

One of three things I repeat again and again, must take place: a reduction of the interest of the Debt open and flagrant; little shillings; or, a repeal of Peel's Bill. In either of these cases we have the feast of the gridiron, the emblem of which I shall put at the head of the Register again as soon as the Parliament shall meet. Whenever the feast shall take place, I shall, as I before intimated, call upon the Abigail's of England for a splendid contribution of geese, more than two hundred of which are already promised from Norfolk, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Berkshire, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, and Herefordshire. Every man shall have his goose, and take him to pieces limb by limb and bone by bone, as I have the system.

A correspondent writes to me,

that, on Saturday morning, the 17th inst. "the walls and other conspicuous places in and about this city were found covered with inscriptions, in letters of fearful form and dimensions, to the following effect: '*Beware of Bank notes.*'—'Get gold for paper.'—'No paper money,' and the like.—A very great sensation has been excited, and the faces of certain persons are observed to be most portentously long and dismal. It is understood, that some of the creatures of the rag system have been circulating a report, that *bad Sovereigns* are passing about the country! We know nothing of such occurrences here, unless they allude to a circumstance which took place a week or two ago, when one was certainly passing; but even this was of full weight! The manner in which this was handled will, it is hoped, prevent any other of the specie from appearing in this neighbourhood."

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These Canterbury lads do right. They are determined, it seems, that the image of Majesty shall not be dishonoured by appearing in base materials, whatever may be their weight. I wish this correspondent would tell me his name: I should like to see him when I go into Kent.

I had nearly forgotten to mention a very material fact; namely, that, when the news arrived of the stoppage of Blake's rags, a *post-chaise and four* was dispatched to the neighbouring Banks, loaded with *sovereigns!* That's good! It would not do to send the rags of the *Old Mother!* That will do no longer. People begin to know *money* from rags. This is one of the many ways that the gold will take to get about the country. Indeed, it *must* advance as the country rags recede; or, rather, as they are sucked up by *taxation*; for that, as I shewed in my Journal (page 1192,) is the great swallower of them. Many of the banks must *break*: that puts

an end to *so much*; and those that do not break, must draw in their paper, till they have none at all out. For (and I beg you to observe it) whatever paper a banker have out, is so much of *debt*, unless it be out upon *discount*, and, at this time, there can be little out in that way. It is *debt*, and, of course, as *prices fall*, the debt becomes *every day heavier and heavier*. I pray you to mark this; and, if you do, you will never hold a country rag for five minutes. What pretty creatures must those be, then, who *hoard* them! Why, they deserve to be ruined, to be sure. They deserve to be beggars, and beggars they will be.

And now, my friends, I, for the present, take my leave of you. Remember, that you may not have long to work in, not a soul of us knows what will take place, any more than we know the manner or the moment of our death, and this for the best of all possible reasons; namely, that those who

have the power of acting, are not able even to give a *guess* at what they shall do.

I am your Friend,
And most obedient Servant,

W.M. COBBETT.

JOURNAL.

BOLLITREE CASTLE, Herefordshire, Friday, 9 Nov.—I got to this beautiful place (*Mr. Palmer's*) yesterday, from Gloucester. This is in the parish of *Weston*, two miles on the Gloucester side of *Ross*, and, if not the first, nearly the first, parish in Herefordshire upon leaving Gloucester to go on through *Ross* to *Hereford*.—On quitting Gloucester I crossed the *Severne*, which had overflowed its banks and covered the meadows with water.—The soil good but stiff. The coppices and woods very much like those upon the clays in the South of Hampshire and in Sussex; but the land

better for corn and grass. The goodness of the land is shown by the apple-trees, and by the sort of sheep and cattle fed here. The sheep are a cross between the Ryland and Leicester, and the cattle of the Herefordshire kind. These would starve in the pastures of any part of Hampshire or Sussex that I have ever seen.—At about seven miles from Gloucester I came to *hills* and the land changed from the *whitish* soil, which I had hitherto seen, to a *red brown*, with layers of *flat stone of a reddish cast under it*. Thus it continued to Bollitree. The trees of all kinds are very fine on the hills as well as in the bottoms.—The spot where I now am is peculiarly well situated in all respects. The land very rich, the pastures the finest I ever saw, the trees of all kinds surpassing upon an average any that I have before seen in England. From the house, you see, in front and winding round to the left, a lofty hill, called *Penyard hill*, at about a mile and a half distance, covered

with oaks of the finest growth ; along at the foot of this wood are fields and orchards continuing the slope of the hill down for a considerable distance, and, as the ground lies in a sort of *ridges* from the wood to the foot of the slope, the hill-and-dell is very beautiful. One of these dells with the two adjoining sides of hills is an *orchard* belonging to MR. PALMER, and the trees, the ground, and every thing belonging to it, put me in mind of the most beautiful of the spots in the North of Long Island. Sheltered by a lofty wood ; the grass fine beneath the fruit trees ; the soil dry under foot though the rain had scarcely ceased to fall ; no moss on the trees ; the leaves of many of them *yet green* ; every thing brought my mind to the beautiful orchards near Bayside, Little Neck, Musquito Cove, and Oyster Bay, in Long Island. No wonder that this is a country of *cider* and *perry* ; but, what a shame it is, that *here*, at any rate, the owners and cultivators of the

soil, not content with these, should, for mere fashion's sake, waste their substance on *wine* and *spirits* ! They really deserve the contempt of mankind and the curses of *neir children*.—The woody hill mentioned before, winds away to the left, and carries the eye on to the *forest of Dean*, from which it is divided by a narrow and very deep valley. Away to the right of Penyard Hill lies, in the bottom, at two miles distance, and on the bank of the river *Wye*, the town of Ross, over which we look down the vale to *Monmouth* and see the Welsh hills beyond it. Beneath Penyard Hill, and on one of the *ridges* before mentioned, is the parish church of Weston, with some pretty white cottages near it peeping through the orchard and other trees ; and, coming to the paddock before the house, are some of the largest and loftiest trees in the country, standing singly here and there, amongst which is the very largest and loftiest walnut-tree that I believe

I ever saw, either in America or in England. In short, there wants nothing but the autumnal colours of the American trees to make this the most beautiful spot I ever beheld.—I was much amused for an hour after daylight this morning in looking at the clouds, rising, at intervals, from the dells on the side of Penyard Hill and flying to the top, and then over the Hill. Some of the clouds went up in a roundish and compact form. Others rose in a sort of string or stream, the tops of them going over the hill before the bottoms were clear of the place whence they had arisen. Sometimes the clouds gathered themselves together along the top of the hill, and seemed to connect the topmost trees with the sky.— I have been to-day to look at Mr. PALMER's fine crops of *Swedish Turnips*, which are, in general, called "*Swedes*." These crops having been raised according to my plan, I feel, of course, great interest in the matter. The Swedes

occupy two fields: one of thirteen, and one of seventeen acres. The main part of the seventeen acre field was *drilled*, on ridges, four feet apart, a single row on a ridge, at different times, between 16th April and 29th May. An acre and a half of this piece was *transplanted* on four-feet ridges 30th July. About half an acre across the middle of the field was sown *broad-cast* 14th April.—In the thirteen-acre field there is about half an acre sown *broad-cast* on the 1st of June; the rest of the field was *transplanted*; part in the first week of June, part in the last week of June, part from the 12th to 18th July, and the rest (about three acres) from 21st to 23d July. The drilled Swedes in the seventeen acre field, contains full 23 tons to the acre; the transplanted ones in *that* field, 15 tons, and the broad-cast not exceeding 10 tons. Those in the thirteen-acre field which were transplanted before the 21st July, contain 27 if not 30 tons; and the rest of *that*

field about 17 tons to the acre. The broad-cast piece here (half an acre) may contain 7 tons. The shortness of my time will prevent us from ascertaining the weight by *actual weighings*; but, such is the crop, according to the best of my judgment, after a very minute survey of it in every part of each field.—Now here is a little short of 800 tons of food, about a fifth part of which consists of *tops*; and, of course, there is about 640 tons of *bulb*. As to the *value* and *uses* of this prodigious crop I need say nothing; and, as to the time and manner of sowing and raising the plants for transplanting, the act of transplanting, and the after cultivation, Mr. PALMER has followed the directions contained in my *Year's Residence in America*; and, indeed, he is forward to acknowledge, that he had never thought of this mode of culture, which he has followed now for three years, and which he has found so advantageous, until he read

that work, a work which the *Farmer's Journal* thought proper to treat as a *romance*.—Mr. PALMER has had some *cabbages* of the large, drum-head, kind. He had about *three acres*, in rows at four feet apart, and at little less than three feet apart in the rows, making *ten thousand* cabbages on the three acres. He kept ninety-five wethers and ninety-six ewes (large fatting sheep) upon them for *five weeks* all but two days, ending in the first week of November. The sheep, which are now feeding off yellow turnips in an adjoining part of the same field, come back over the cabbage-ground and *scoop out the stumps* almost to the ground in many cases. This ground is going to be ploughed for wheat immediately. Cabbages are a very fine *autumn crop*; but it is the *Swedes* on which you must rely for the spring, and on *housed* or *stacked* Swedes too; for they will *rot* in many of our winters, if left in the ground. I have had them rot myself, and I saw, in

March 1820, hundreds of acres rotten in Warwickshire and Northamptonshire. Mr. PALMER greatly prefers the *transplanting* to the drilling. It has numerous advantages over the drilling; greater regularity of crop, greater certainty, the only *sure* way of avoiding the *fly*, greater crop, admitting of two months later preparation of land, can come *after* *vetches* cut up for horses (as, indeed, a part of Mr. PALMER's transplanted Swedes did), and *requiring less labour and expence*. I asserted this in my *Year's Residence*; and Mr. PALMER, who has been very particular in ascertaining the fact, states positively, that the *expence* of transplanting *is not so great* as the hoeing and setting out of the drilled crops, and *not so great as the common hoeings of broad-cast*. This, I think, *settles* the question. But, the advantages of the wide-row culture by no means confine themselves to the green and root crop; for, Mr. PALMER drills his *wheat* upon the same ridges,

without ploughing, after he has taken off the Swedes. He drills it at *eight inches*, and puts in from eight to ten gallons to the acre. His crop of 1820, drilled in this way, averaged 40 bushels to the acre; part drilled in November, and part so late as February. It was the common Lammas wheat. His *last* crop of wheat is not yet ascertained; but, it was better after the Swedes than in any other of his land. His manner of taking off the crop is excellent. He first cuts off and carries away the *tops*. Then he has an implement, drawn by two oxen, walking on each side of the ridge, with which he cuts off the *tap root* of the Swedes without disturbing the land of the ridge. Any child can then pull up the bulb. Thus the ground, clean as a garden, and in that compact state which the wheat is well known to like, is ready, at once, for drilling with wheat. As to the *uses* to which he applies the crop, tops as well as bulbs, I must speak of these hereafter, and

in a work of a description different from this. I have been thus particular here, because the *Farmer's Journal* treated my book as a pack of lies. I know that my (for it is *mine*) system of cattle-food husbandry will finally be that of *all England*, as it already is that of America; but, what I am doing here is merely in self-defence against the slanders, the malignant slanders, of the *Farmer's Journal*. Where is a *Whig lord*, who, some years ago, wrote to a gentleman, that "he would have *nothing to do* with any *reform* that *Cobbett* was engaged in." But, in spite of the brutal *Journal*, farmers are not such fools as this lord was: they will not reject a good crop, because they can have it only by acting upon my plan; and this lord will, I imagine, yet see the day when he will be less averse from having to do with a reform in which "*Cobbett*" shall be engaged.

Old Hall, Saturday night,
10. November.—Went to *Hereford* this morning. It was mar-

ket-day. My arrival became known, and, I am sure, I cannot tell how. A sort of *buzz* got about. I could perceive here, as I always have elsewhere, very ardent friends and very bitter enemies; but all full of *curiosity*. One thing could not fail to please me exceedingly: my friends were *gay* and my enemies *gloomy*: the former *smiled*, and the latter, in endeavouring to screw their features into a sneer, could get them no further than the half sour and half sad: the former seemed, in their looks to say, "here he is," and the latter to respond, "Yes, G—d—him!"—I went into the market-place, amongst the farmers, with whom, in general, I was very much pleased. If I were to live in the county two months, I should be acquainted with every man of them.—The country is very fine all the way from Ross to Hereford. The soil is always a red loam upon a bed of stone. The trees are very fine, and certainly winter comes *later* here than in Middlesex. Some of the oak

trees are still *perfectly green*, and many of the ashes as green as in September.—In coming from Hereford to this place, which is the residence of Mrs. PALMER and that of her two younger sons, Messrs. PHILLIP and WALTER PALMER, who with their brother had accompanied me to Hereford; in coming to this place, which lies at about two miles distance from the great road, and at about an equal distance from HEREFORD and from Ross, we met with something, the sight of which pleased me exceedingly: it was that of a very pretty pleasant-looking lady (and *young*. too) with two beautiful children, riding in a little sort of chaise-cart, drawn by *an ass*, which she was driving in reins. She appeared to be well known to my friends, who drew up and spoke to her, calling her Mrs. Lock, or *Locky* (I hope it was not *Lockart*) or some such name. Her husband, who is, I suppose, some young farmer of the neighbourhood, may well call himself Mr. *Lucky*; for,

to have such a wife, and for such a wife to have the good sense to put up with an ass-cart, in order to avoid, as much as possible, feeding those cormorants who gorge on the taxes, is a blessing that falls, I am afraid, to the lot of very few rich farmers. Mrs. Lock (if that be her name) is a real *practical radical*. Others of us resort to radical coffee and radical tea; and she has a *radical carriage*. This is a very effectual way of assailing the THING, and peculiarly well suited for the practice of the female sex. But, the self-denial ought not to be imposed on the wife only: the husband ought to set the example: and, let me hope, that Mr. Lock, does not indulge in the use of wine and spirits, while Mrs. Lock and her children ride in a Jack-ass gig; for, if he do, he wastes, in this way, the means of keeping her *a chariot and pair*. If there be to be any expence not absolutely necessary; if there be to be any thing bordering on extravagance, surely it ought to be for

the pleasure of that part of the family, who have the least number of objects of enjoyment ; and, for a husband to indulge himself in the guzzling of expensive, unnecessary, and really injurious drink, to the tune, perhaps, of 50 or 100 pounds a year, while he preaches economy to his wife, and, with a face as long as my arm, talks of the low price of corn and wheedles her out of a curricle into a Jack-ass cart, is not only unjust but *unmanly*.

Old Hall, Sunday night, 11. November.—We have ridden today, though in the rain for a great part of the time, over the fine farm of Mr. PHILIP PALMER, at this place, and that of Mr. WALTER PALMER, in the adjoining parish of PENCYD. Every thing here is good, arable land, pastures, orchards, coppices, and timber trees, especially the elms, many scores of which approach nearly to a hundred feet in height. Mr. PHILIP PALMER has four acres of Swedes on four-feet ridges, drilled on the 11th and

14th of May. The plants were very much injured by the *fly*; so much, that it was a question, whether the whole piece ought not to be ploughed up. However, the gaps in the rows were filled up by *transplanting*; and the ground was *twice ploughed* between the ridges. The crop here is very fine; and, I should think that its weight could not be less than *17 tons* to the acre.—Of Mr. WALTER PALMER's Swedes, five acres were drilled, on ridges nearly four feet apart, on the 3d of June; four acres on the 15th of June; and an acre and a half *transplanted* (after *vetches*) on the *fifteenth of August*. The weight of the first is about *twenty tons* to the acre; that of the second not much less; and that of the last even, *five or six tons*. The first two pieces were mauled to pieces by the *fly*; but the gaps were filled up by *transplanting*, the ground being *digged* on the tops of the ridges to receive the plants. So that, perhaps, a *third part*, or more of the crop is due to the

transplanting. As to the last piece, that transplanted on the 15th of August, after vetches, it is clear, that there could have been no crop without transplanting; and, after all, the crop is by no means a bad one.—It is clear enough to me, that this system will finally prevail all over England. The “*loyal*,” indeed, may be afraid to adopt it, lest it should contain something of “*radicalism*.” Sap-headed fools! They will find something to do, I believe, soon, besides railing against *radicals*. We will din “*radical*” and “*national faith*” in their ears, till they shall dread the din as much as a dog does the sound of the bell that is tied to the whip.

BOLLITREE, Monday, 12 Nov.— Returned this morning and rode about the farm, and also about that of Mr. WINNAL, where I saw, for the first time, a plough going *without being held*. The man drove the three horses that drew the plough, and carried the plough round at the ends; but left it to itself the rest of the time.

There was a skim coulter that turned the sward in under the furrow; and the work was done very neatly. This gentleman has six acres of *cabbages*, on ridges four feet apart, with a distance of thirty inches between the plants on the ridge. He has weighed one of what he deemed an average weight, and found it to weigh fifteen pounds without the stump. Now, as there are 4320 upon an acre, the weight of the acres is *thirty tons* all but 400 pounds! This is a prodigious crop, and it is peculiarly well suited for food for sheep at this season of the year. Indeed it is good for any farm-stock, oxen, cows, pigs: all like these loafed cabbages. For hogs in yard, after the stubbles are gone; and before the tops of the Swedes come in. What masses of manure may be created by this means! But, above all things, for *sheep* to feed off upon the ground. Common turnips have not *half the substance* in them weight for weight. Then, they are in

the ground ; they are *dirty*, and, in wet weather, the sheep must starve, or eat a great deal of dirt. This very day, for instance, what a sorry sight is a flock of fatting sheep upon turnips ; what a mess of dirt and stubble ! The cabbage stands boldly up above the ground ; and the sheep eats it all up without treading a morsel in the dirt. Mr. Winnal has a large flock of sheep feeding on his cabbages, which they will have finished, perhaps, by January. This gentleman also has some "*radical Swedes*," as they call them in Norfolk. A part of his crop is on ridges five feet apart with *two rows* on the ridge, a part on *four* feet ridges with *one* row on the ridge. I cannot see that any thing is gained in weight by the double rows. I think, that there may be nearly twenty tons to the acre. Another piece Mr. WINNAL transplanted after *vetches*. They are very fine ; and, altogether, he has a crop that any one but a "*loyal*" farmer might envy him.—This is

really the *radical* system of husbandry. *Radical* means, *belonging to the root* ; *going to the root*. And the main principle of this system (first taught by *Tull*) is, that the *root* of the plant is to be fed by *deep tillage*, while it is growing ; and, to do this we must have our *wide distances*. Our system of husbandry is happily illustrative of our system of polities. Our lines of movement are fair and straightforward. We destroy all weeds, which, like tax-eaters, do nothing but devour the sustenance that ought to feed the valuable plants. Our plants are all *well fed* ; and our nations of *Swedes* and of cabbages present a happy uniformity of enjoyments and of bulk, and not, as in the broad-cast system of Corruption, here and there one of enormous size, surrounded by thousands of poor little starveling things, scarcely distinguishable by the keenest eye, or, if seen, seen only to inspire a contempt of the husbandman. The Norfolk boys are, therefore, right in

calling their Swedes *radical Swedes*.

BOLLITREE, Tuesday, 13 Nov.—Rode to-day to see a grove belonging to MRS. WESTPHALIN, which contains the very finest trees, *oaks*, *chesnuts* and *ashes*, that I ever saw in England. This grove is worth going from London to Weston to see. The Lady, who is very much beloved in her neighbourhood, is, apparently, of the *old school*; and her house and gardens, situated in a beautiful dell, form, I think, the most comfortable looking thing of the kind that I ever saw. If she had known, that I was in her grove, I dare say she would have expected it to blaze up in flames; or, at least, that I was come to view the premises previous to confiscation! I can forgive persons like her; but I cannot forgive the Parsons and others who have misled them! Mrs. Westphalin, if she live many years, will find, that the best friends of the owners of the land are those who have endeavoured to produce such a reform of

the Parliament as would have prevented the ruin of tenants.—This parish of WESTON is remarkable for having a Rector, *who has constantly resided for twenty years!* I do not believe, that there is an instance to match this in the whole kingdom. However, the "*reverend*" gentlemen may be assured, that, before many years have passed over their heads, they will be *very glad to reside in their parsonage houses.*

BOLLITREE, Wednesday, 14 Nov.—Rode to the *Forest of Dean*, up a very steep hill. The *lanes* here are between high banks, and, on the sides of the hills, the road is a *rock*, the water having, long ago, washed all the earth away. Pretty works are, I find, carried on here, as is the case in all the other *public forests!* Are these things *always* to be carried on in this way? Here is a domain of *thirty thousand acres* of the finest timber-land in the world, and with coal-mines endless! Is this *worth nothing?* Cannot each acre yield *ten trees a year?* Are not these

trees worth *a pound a piece?* Is not the estate worth *three or four hundred thousand pounds a year?* And does it yield *any thing to the public,* to whom it belongs? But, it is useless to waste one's breath in this way. We must have a *reform of the Parliament:* without it the whole thing will fall to pieces.—The only good purpose that these forests answer is that of furnishing a place of being to labourers' families on their skirts; and here their cottages are very neat, and the people look hearty and well, just as they do round the forests in Hampshire. Every cottage has a pig, or two. These graze in the forest, and, in the fall, eat *acorns* and *beech-nuts* and the *seed of the ash;* for, these last, as well as the others, are very full of oil, and a pig that is put to his shifts will pick the seed very nicely out from the husks. Some of these foresters keep cows, and all of them have *bits of ground,* cribbed, of course, at different times, from the forest: and, to what better use can the ground be

put? I saw several *wheat stubbles* from 40 rods to 10 rods. I asked one man how much wheat he had from about 10 rods. He said *more than two bushels.* Here is bread for three weeks, or more, perhaps; and a winter's straw for the pig besides. Are these things nothing? The dead limbs and old roots of the forest give *fuel;* and how happy are these people, compared with the poor creatures about Great Bedwin and Cricklade, where they have neither land nor shelter, and where I saw the girls carrying home *bean* and *wheat stubble for fuel!* Those countries, always but badly furnished with fuel, the desolating and damnable system of paper-money, by sweeping away small homesteads, and laying ten farms into one, has literally *stripped* of all shelter for the labourer. A farmer, in such cases, has a whole *domain in his hands,* and this, not only to the manifest injury of the public at large, but in *open violation of positive law.* The poor forger is hanged; but, where is

the prosecutor of the *monopolizing farmer*, though the *law* is as clear in the one case as in the other? But, it required this infernal system to render every wholesome regulation nugatory; and to reduce to such abject misery a people famed in all ages for the goodness of their food and their dress. There is one farmer, in the North of Hampshire, who has nearly *eight thousand acres of land in his hands*; who grows fourteen hundred acres of wheat and two thousand acres of barley! He occupies what was formerly 40 farms! Is it any wonder that *paupers increase*? And is there not here cause enough for the increase of *poor*, without resorting to the doctrine of the barbarous and impious **MALTHUS** and his assistants, the *feelosophers* of the Edinburgh Review, those eulogists and understrappers of the Whig-Oligarchy? "This farmer has done nothing *"unlawful,"* some one will say. I say he has; for there is a law to forbid him thus to monopolize land. But, no matter; the

laws, the management of the affairs of a nation, *ought to be such as to prevent the existence of the temptation to such monopoly*. And, even now, the evil ought to be remedied, and could be remedied, in the space of half a dozen years. The disappearance of the paper-money would do the thing in time; but this might be assisted by legislative measures.—In returning from the forest we were overtaken by my son, whom I had begged to come from London to see this beautiful country. On the road-side we saw two lazy-looking fellows, in long great coats and bundles in their hands, going into a cottage. "What do you deal in?" said I, to one of them who had not yet entered the house. "In the *medical way*," said he. And, I find, that vagabonds of this description are seen all over the country, with *tea-licences* in their pockets. They vend *tea, drugs, and religious tracts*. The first to bring the body into a debilitated state; the second to finish the corporeal part of the business, and

the third to prepare the spirit for its separation from the clay ! Never was a system so well calculated as the present to degrade, debase and enslave a people! Law, and, as if that were not sufficient, enormous subscriptions are made ; every thing that can be done is done to favour these perambulatory impostors in their depredations on the ignorant. While every thing that can be done is done, to prevent them from reading, or from hearing of, any thing that has a tendency to give them rational notions, or to better their lot. However, all is not buried in ignorance. Down the deep and beautiful valley between Penyard Hill and the Hills on the side of the Forest of Dean, there runs a stream of water. On that stream of water there is a *paper-mill*. In that paper-mill there is a set of workmen. That set of workmen do, I am told, *take the Register*, and have taken it for years ! It was to these good and sensible men, it is supposed, that the *ringing of the bells* of Weston church, upon

my arrival, was to be ascribed ; for, nobody that I visited had any knowledge of the cause. What a subject for lamentation with corrupt lamentation with corrupt hypocrites ! That even on this secluded spot there should be a leaven of common sense ! No : *all* is not enveloped in brute ignorance yet, in spite of every artifice that hellish Corruption has been able to employ ; in spite of all her menaces and all her brutalities and cruelties.

[The rest of my Journal, from the 15th to the 23d of November inclusive, I must put off till my next Number.]

COURT NEWS.

THE King went to Hanover late in October ; came back by way of Calais (without going to Paris,) about fifteen days ago ; came into London *in the night* ; went to Brighton in a few days after ; refused to receive *publickly* an address from the Brightonians ;

and the Brighton paper tells us, that his Majesty means to remain there *till Easter*; and means to live in a very *private manner* all the while. No one can, then, accuse his Majesty of *ostentation*, at any rate.

CANNING, it is said, is to be *Governor General of India!* What; will he not stop, will not this cock of all cocks, stop to see the "*glorious Sun of Prosperity*" break out upon us once more! Or, are we to wait for the re-appearance of the cheering luminary 'till he comes back? He is really "*the child and the champion*" of the Pitt-system; and, I can assure him, that that system never stood in need of a *champion* so much as at this moment.

FARMERS' MEETING.

IN my last Register, at page 1250, I notified my intention of making a proposition to Mr. WEBB HALL, having for its object the saving of thousands upon thousands of farmers from ruin.— This proposition I shall make in a week or two. But, besides this, I shall invite *two farmers from each county* to meet in London, in about a month after the Par-

liament has met; and, from this meeting we can, I think, send forth that which will put an *end* to the *Agricultural delusion*, which is the most shocking that ever was heard of in the world. In Gloucestershire they are, I see, persevering in the silly stuff about *foreign corn*. I wonder Mr. HALL is not ashamed of this perseverance. However, I have this consolation, and a very great one it is, that the readers of the Register, that *my friends* amongst the farmers, *are safe*. They know better than to take, or hold, lands in the hope, that *prices will rise again*. They laugh at the idea of *relief* from a Corn-Bill.

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DECEMBER 1, 1821.

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